

proud of the important work he will take on as President of the World Union.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his remarkable career, Rabbi Richard Block has preached a message of compassion, justice and service to others. Every day of his life he has served as a shining example of these values. It is for these reasons that I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this noble man of faith and this passionate community leader for his inspired leadership of Congregation Beth Am. We honor him for his eloquent voice for good and his having made our community and our country infinitely better.

HONORING MRS. DORIS SPAIN ON
THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT
FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE
TO THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND THE
STATE OF TENNESSEE

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mrs. Doris Spain and her service to the Tennessee Department of Health and the State of Tennessee.

Mrs. Spain will retire from the Tennessee Department of Health after 33 years of faithful service on June 30, 1999. She will be greatly missed.

Mrs. Spain, a native Tennessean, began her career with the Tennessee Department of Health in September of 1966 as a stenographer in the Division of Statistical Services. She now serves as Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Health Services, the department's largest bureau, with overall management responsibility for approximately 3,000 employees and an annual budget of \$264 million. As Assistant Commissioner, Mrs. Spain directs the delivery of public health services to the citizens of Tennessee through 95 county health departments and 13 central office programs.

Mrs. Spain is a lifetime member of the Tennessee Public Health Association and has served that organization as co-chairperson of the Program Committee, chairperson of the Arrangements Committee, chairperson of the Awards Committee, board member, vice-president, and, in 1985, as president. In 1995, Mrs. Spain served as chairperson of the Awards Committee of the Rural Health Association of Tennessee. In addition, she is a member of the Southern Health Association, the Middle Tennessee Area Health Education Council, the Graduate Medical Program/Public Health Residency Advisory Committee of Meharry Medical College, the Board of Directors of the National Association of City and County Health Officials, the Board of Directors of the Rural Health Association of Tennessee, and the Board of Directors of the Comprehensive Care Center.

Mrs. Spain has been honored numerous times by her peers throughout her career. These awards include: the Distinguished Service Award, Area Health Education Center, 1987; the Distinguished Service Award, Ten-

nessee Public Health Association, 1987; the Alex B. Shipley, MD Award, Tennessee Public Health Association, 1987; the Presidential Award, Rural Health Association of Tennessee, 1995; the Distinguished Service Award, Tennessee Public Health Association, 1997; and in 1990, she was selected to attend the Tennessee Government Executive Institute.

Mrs. Spain has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of public health in the State of Tennessee and has unselfishly served its citizens for over 33 years. Her caring and leadership have benefited not only the Department of Health, but all Tennesseans. She has served as an example to her peers, her friends and her family. For these reasons I honor Mrs. Doris Spain today and wish her the best in her retirement. God bless.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN D.L.
"PAPPY" HICKS

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a true American hero, Captain D.L. "Pappy" Hicks. In a recent trip to Washington, Pappy was honored by Congress for his dedication and service in the Secret Army, which operated in Laos during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Pappy was a deep, covert operator in clandestine operations in South Asia from 1959 until 1982. Many of these operations have remained concealed over the years as a result of their top secret nature. American citizens and U.S. troops, alike, were unaware that any fighting was occurring in Laos during the Vietnam War, hence the operations have often been called the "Secret War". The Secret Army was comprised of Hmong and other Laotian Mountain people in cooperation with the Royal Laotian Army and American advisors such as the CIA, U.S. Army Special Forces, and U.S. Army covert operators. Yet, as a result of the covert nature of their service, the men who gave their lives serving in the Secret Army in Laos are not recognized on the Vietnam War Memorial. Their mission was to find potential enemies of the United States operating within the Laotian borders with the North Vietnamese. Reportedly, these men saved thousands of American lives through their efforts; thus, their recent Washington tribute was an emotional one for Pappy.

At the ceremony, Pappy was given a pa'ndua, a ritualistic cloth used to tell the history of the Hmong people, by General Vang Pao, his Laos commanding officer. In his speech, Pappy struggled to fight back tears as he recollected his time in Laos and the injuries he sustained while operating in that area. As he spoke to his fellow soldiers, Pappy remarked, "Ever so often, years after the fact, when we become old men, we who worked in the dark are let out in the light for a moment of glory. For me, this is the day".

Captain Hicks, from the Fourth District of Texas, currently resides in Troup, Texas, with his lovely wife of forty-five years, Marjorie Ann

Tupa. Mr. Speaker, as we adjourn today, let us do so in honor of this true American hero—Captain D.L. "Pappy" Hicks.

UPON INTRODUCTION OF THE
COMMUNITY HOSPITAL PRESERVA-
TION ACT

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Community Hospital Preservation Act. The purpose of this legislation is to provide a financial lifeline to those community hospitals that are struggling for survival.

Hospitals in general are under significant financial pressure from a number of sources, which include Medicare and Medicaid cuts, reductions in managed care reimbursements, and a significant increase in the number of uninsured patients.

Small, non-profit community hospitals are particularly at risk. As non-profits, they lack the access to equity capital that for-profit hospitals have. As smaller hospitals, they lack the economies of scale and negotiating leverage that larger hospitals or chains have in dealing with suppliers, insurers, and managed care firms. In my district, statewide, and nationwide, we are seeing community hospitals cutting health care services, laying off employees, and in too many cases, fighting for survival.

The Community Hospital Preservation Act would help stabilize the finances of these hospitals and keep them operational, by authorizing up to \$1 billion a year in capital loans over five years for non-profit community hospitals in financial distress.

Under the legislation, community hospitals are eligible for forgivable capital loans if they are non-profit, have assets of less than \$75 million, are experiencing financial difficulties, and are an "essential source of basic hospital health care services" in the local community. The forgivable loans may range from \$100,000 to \$2.5 million per hospital. Each loan must be matched dollar for dollar with a state, local, or private grant or loan. If the hospital continues to meet annual eligibility criteria, including operational efficiencies, the capital loan will be forgiven over time, and thereby converted into a grant.

Non-profit community hospitals serve an essential public purpose in their local communities. Hospital closures or service reductions adversely affect the families and individuals who rely on that hospital for life-saving care. Hospital closure also undermines the broader economic health of a community. There is clearly a public purpose in maintaining and enhancing these institutions.

Two years ago, as part of the Balanced Budget Act, Congress reduced Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements to hospitals. The same federal government that has taken such actions should be prepared to step in to soften the blow of these cuts for those hospitals most at risk. Both political parties have pledged to set aside trillions to save Social Security for our senior citizens. It is not too much to set aside a tiny fraction of that to save the hospitals that provide essential health security for